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ABSTRACT

Until very recently the study abroad programs that approximately 32,000 American students a year participate in have not been properly evaluated as to the merits to be gained from studying in a foreign culture. Thus, the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education (FRACHE) established a Committee on Foreign Study to undertake such an evaluation. This document presents the findings of the Committee whose members traveled to the foreign study sites for the evaluation. The investigators took into account (1) the focus of the study abroad programs both from the perspective of the home country and the site country; (2) the various types of programs offered; (3) admission and orientation procedures; (4) soundness of academic programs; (5) facilities needs; (6) the need for continuing evaluation; (7) the cost of study abroad programs; (8) student performance evaluation; and (9) the role of the field director. The Committee recommends that continuing interregional evaluation of foreign study programs of accredited institutions be made and that the evaluations become a significant part of continuing attention. (HS)

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EVALUATION OF OVERSEAS STUDY PROGRAMS
A PILOT STUDY CONDUCTED BY FRACHE - SPRING 1972

During the past decade the number of students from U. S. colleges participating in foreign study programs has reached a high level: thirty-two thousand (32,000) U. S. students were involved in 208 foreign study programs during the academic year of 1970-71, according to the Institute of International Education's "Open Doors." The involvement of students in study abroad ranges from travel tours and semesters to junior years and graduate study.

The educational value and experience of foreign study programs have not generally been evaluated, and neither have their quality and consistency. Rapid growth, bogus commercial ventures, opportunistic operators, deceptive promises of universally acceptable credit--these and other factors have created serious problems for foreign study activities. The varying quality and control of study abroad programs has produced disappointment among some students, embarrassment to sponsoring institutions, and occasionally even strained relations with foreign countries.

Unfortunately, the self-regulation and evaluation which should have accompanied the development of overseas study programs did not. Thus, their growth, diversity, and proliferation have increasingly necessitated some form of effective review and assessment. The Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education (FRACHE) has recognized for some time the importance of evaluating study abroad programs sponsored by accredited institutions in the United States. As a first step, the Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions undertook a review of the involvement of accredited institutions of the six regions in overseas study activities. Their findings resulted in recommendation to the Federation Council of a policy statement on Study Abroad Programs which was adopted and published in March 1967.

After adoption of this statement, however, there was little if any institutional acknowledgement of the policies which might assure improved experiences for students abroad. Therefore, concern about the continued uneveness of overseas study programs prompted FRACHE to conduct, with no expense to the institutions, a pilot study of programs sponsored by eleven colleges and universities located within the several accrediting regions of the U. S. Because of the concentration of programs, Madrid and Strasbourg were selected for a spring 1972 on-site evaluation.

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Mr. Gordon Sweet, Executive Secretary of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, was appointed by FRACHE to direct the study with the assistance of Dr. Kay J. Andersen, Executive Director of the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities, Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Dr. Allan O. Pfnister, Professor of Higher Education, University of Denver, was asked to join Mr. Sweet and Dr. Andersen in planning the evaluation project, and later was named chairman of the evaluation team. The planning committee met with representatives of various agencies concerned with overseas study programs, including the Institute of European Studies, The Council of Affiliated Institutions, The Great Lakes College Association, The Council on International Educational Exchange, and the Associated Colleges of the Midwest, all of which offered approval and cooperation for the FRACHE project. The committee also planned self-study guidelines essential to the evaluation process, and developed precise questions pertinent to each institution's study abroad program. The guidelines consisted of two sections, one dealing with the institution's involvement in foreign study programs generally, and one concentrating on the precise programs to be evaluated by FRACHE. Major topics related to each program included in the self-study guide were: purpose and objectives, administration, admissions and orientation, on-location characteristics such as staffing and facilities, relationships between the host country and the sponsoring institution, and provisions for evaluation and change. Each major topic was related to a series of detailed questions.

Once the participating colleges were selected and began preparation of their self-study reports, the planning committee then selected the evaluation team, choosing the members on the basis of their accrediting experience, language facility, previous experience in attending or teaching in institutions abroad, and regional representation. Although not all regions were represented, the team reflected a cross section of institutions and geographic areas, and included the following members in addition to the planning committee:

Dr. John Elmendorf, President of New College, Sarasota, Florida
Dr. Yvette Fallandy, Provost and Professor of French, California State College at Sonoma, Sonoma, California
Dr. Henry Holland, Professor of Modern Languages, Colby College, Waterville, Maine
Dr. Josephine Sobrino, Professor of Spanish, University of Houston, Houston, Texas

Mr. Arthur Schlueter, Assistant to Mr. Sweet, also accompanied the team as an observer. The planning committee and the evaluation team received generous cooperation and support from the State Department in Washington, and from U. S. Cultural Attaches in Paris, Madrid, and Strasbourg, as well as from the Consulates in Madrid and Strasbourg.

The team met for a planning session in New York on May 7, and departed for Europe on the evening of that date. Part of the group went directly to Madrid while others went to Strasbourg and later joined the group in Madrid to complete

the evaluation activities. Meetings and interviews were held with students, faculty members, administrators, U. S. Cultural Attaches and Consular officials, and of course with the field directors. After an intensive two-week visit, the team returned to the U. S. on May 20, 1972.

The team prepared detailed reports for each participating institution, but a number of general observations applying in varying degrees to the programs in Madrid and Strasbourg can be made. Among them are the following:

1. Primary Focus of the Study Abroad Programs

> As the committee looked at the statements of objectives and purpose of the study programs, they found that these have not always been accurately stated or have not been reviewed since some of the programs were initiated. Publications recruiting study participants are in some cases misleading. Study programs should be evaluated by the institutions to determine if their objectives and the objectives of the students have been met. Colleges should evaluate not only the academic aspects but also the emphasis on the cultural experience derived from study abroad. Student participation in the evaluation process is essential. Publications introducing students to foreign study should be informative and thoroughly describe objectives and purpose, requirements for admission, medical services, costs, travel and living arrangements, courses to be taught, all faculty, names of study directors abroad, and the value of credits awarded.

The 1967 Federation statement on Undergraduate Study Abroad Programs places a great deal of emphasis on the development of language skill. Many of the early established study abroad programs did emphasize the development of language skills. We find, however, among the programs reviewed in this visit a wide range of objectives. Language skill still remains a significant part of the experience in each program, but there are different degrees of emphasis being placed upon developing ability in speaking and reading the language and in developing wider acquaintance with the literature of a country. Some programs place greater emphasis upon the study abroad experience as an intercultural experience; being abroad gives a person an opportunity to view another culture and thereby to evaluate his own culture. Language becomes the tool or medium but is not itself the objective of the program. Still other programs include specific advancement in a field of study other than language. In these programs the political scientist or the sociologist uses the study abroad experience as an opportunity to examine another political or social system. And there are permutations and combinations of these major emphases.

With the growth in the number of study abroad programs and the number of students participating in them, one must expect in the future even greater diversity in student objectives. The diversity in individual goals simply reflects the diversity of the student body on a given American campus. All of which creates something of a dilemma. On the one hand, it seems obvious that the institution ought to focus on a limited number of objectives in order to have a well integrated program. On the other hand, if it is to serve a wide range of students, it must provide a variety of opportunities and experiences.

One of the problems the American study abroad program faces as it attempts to broaden the range of courses is that many study areas generally accepted and well established in colleges and universities in the United States are relatively unknown or not well represented in foreign universities. Among these areas are the social sciences, political science and psychology. These are developing disciplines in many European institutions.

In our interviews with students we found that many were questioning the focus of the experience. Persons majoring in art resented the heavy emphasis upon literature. Persons more concerned with linguistics raised questions about emphasis upon literature. The major in sociology or political science wanted an opportunity to spend more time in study directly related to his or her interests.

Perhaps the question becomes one of matching the special opportunities of a given location or university with the range of interests of the students. For those programs affiliated with the University of Madrid, is the particular strength of the University in literature, philosophy, in linguistics, in political science? To what extent can the American program relate itself to these strengths? Or, is Madrid, as a large metropolitan area particularly suited to providing a variety of social encounters? Should greater attention be given to field study and observation?

When students were asked what they expected to get out of the experience, the three points that seemed most frequently to be mentioned were: (1) We want to have more direct contacts with Spanish students, to come to know more about what it means to be a student in Spanish culture. (2) We want to continue the specialized study of a specific major--sociology, literature, language, etc. (3) We want to observe and understand a different culture. While students wanted to have some experience in all three, they tended to emphasize one or the other.

Perhaps what we are saying as an evaluation team is that each institution needs to examine much more carefully what may be the special advantages of study abroad. The assumption has been made that the main reason for studying abroad is to develop a better knowledge of the literature of the country; at least, most courses are so organized. Perhaps institutions ought to examine the other possibilities and develop clearer statements about anticipated outcomes for the guidance of the students.

It is likely that no one institution will be able to cover the full range of program opportunities. For that reason, perhaps greater use of consortia or cooperative ventures should be encouraged. (Parenthetically, we find that even though some institutions share facilities and faculty, they are quite jealous of maintaining their independence. We are not altogether sure, in the light of demands for broader programming, that any institution can retain this degree of independence.)

2. Studying Abroad is Not Generally Studying at a Foreign University

> Study programs which depend on faculty or facilities, wholly or in part, in foreign institutions should accurately state these arrangements to participants prior to departure abroad.

No one of the programs evaluated could properly be said to be a program that enrolls students in either the University of Madrid or the University of Strasbourg. At Strasbourg, the students are enrolled in the Institut International d'Etudes Francaises which provides a course in language, literature, and French civilization for foreign students. In Madrid, at least five different types of programs may be identified, no one of which is directly comparable to the situation in Strasbourg. The comparable program at Madrid, the Cursos Para Estudiantes Extranjeros, was not represented among the programs evaluated, although at least one American college enrolls its students in that program. Five of the ten programs in Madrid evaluated in this project were primarily related to the Facultad de Filosofia y Letras; the Reunidas, in effect a consortium, cooperatively arranged for a series of courses offered by members of the Facultad but given for American students only. The students are registered in the Facultad, but it is more proper to say that they are simply using the facilities and staff of the Facultad. The students report limited opportunity to meet with Spanish students who are regularly enrolled at the University.

One of the four remaining programs is housed in the Instituto de Cultura Hispanica. At the Instituto, the college maintains office and classroom space. The sponsoring institution individually arranges with Spanish faculty for teaching the courses. A number of the teachers are members of the Facultad de Filosofia y Letras. Others are independent scholars, artists, or private citizens.

Two of the institutions reviewed maintain offices and classrooms at the Instituto Internacional en España. Formerly a girl's school, it is now the location for several American study programs. The building at Miguel Angel 8, houses offices, classrooms and a library. It also maintains a limited cafeteria service. Faculty members may be drawn from the faculty of the University or may be independent artists, scholars or private citizens. Each of the two programs develops its own faculty.

One of the colleges maintains its program in one of the colegios mayores. The colegio mayor is a private residential unit, usually under a religious community, that in many ways resembles a British college. It provides a living, social and recreational center. This particular program draws faculty from a number of sources, including the Catholic University. The students live for the most part in colegios. Classes are held in one portion of a colegio mayor. The building affords classroom space and a working library. Students may also attend some classes in the Catholic University.

One program is entirely independent, housed this year in a private residence with limited classroom facilities. Much of the instruction is carried on by three staff members of the home institution. And there are variations beyond the six different structures covering the twelve institutions in the two locations visited.

This is only to suggest that study abroad is many things. While the evaluation team would not propose one arrangement as superior to another, it would emphasize the necessity for institutions to be very clear both in the way in which they describe their programs and affiliations and in the way in which they appoint and retain faculty. Most important is for students to be clearly aware of the particular arrangements under which they are studying. Many of the students interviewed in Madrid and Strasbourg either had not carefully read the material or had not been able to find in the material distributed by the institution a clear description of the kind of program in which they were to enroll.

3. Admissions and Orientation

> A variety of orientation programs were analyzed by the committee. They varied in extent and degree of comprehensiveness and individual orientation on the home campus, orientations on the home campus and on location abroad, or no orientation at all. Comprehensive orientation programs on-site should be conducted to minimize "cultural shock" and shorten the time necessary in adapting to the culture and the student's life style abroad. An optimum orientation program will assist in the goal of maximum involvement and immersion of participants in the culture. An initial orientation should preferably be conducted on the home campus prior to departure. Components in the orientation programs are language facility and a background in the history and culture of the country to be visited.

Orientation of students participating in study abroad programs varies greatly. Among those few programs in which students are drawn from a single

or small group of closely related campuses, it is possible to have joint meetings prior to the students' departure for the overseas site. One university in the group requires students to participate in a semester-long course dealing with various aspects of intercultural education. At the other extreme, students are given little more than instructions on how to apply for admission to the program and regarding the options open for transportation overseas. Most of the programs draw students from several institutions. In such cases, short of having the students from the various institutions gather in a central point before departure, there is little chance to provide any common pre-departure orientation experience. One group of students from a state system of higher education reported widely varying levels of assistance on the several campuses; the level of counseling varied so greatly that it was difficult to believe that the students were, in fact, within the same system.

In general the students, irrespective of programs in which they were enrolled, questioned the value of predeparture orientation. Most seemed to be of the opinion that the most significant orientation, if any, is after one arrives at the overseas site. It then becomes critical that the field director and staff be prepared to provide the initial guidance during the first few weeks that most of the students, even seasoned travelers, need. One university system provides what is in effect a retreat experience in which the students travel together into the provinces, have a series of lectures and field trips which introduce them to academic procedures, the language and the customs of the country. Almost all of the programs provide for intensive or refresher language courses during the first weeks. Generally students are expected to arrive on-site two weeks to a month before actual class sessions begin.

Student opinion seemed to be fairly general that if any orientation program is to be provided during the weeks prior to the class sessions, the orientation program should be fairly intensive. They apparently would much prefer to be deeply involved and wholly immersed in the project rather than engaged in what several students referred to as "Mickey Mouse activities." As an evaluation team, we are convinced that institutions must think through much more clearly what the orientation program should be and should evaluate several approaches. Much more study is needed of the orientation process.

Many students found the language orientation programs poorly adapted to their needs. At least in one program involving students from several universities there was little attempt to differentiate between levels of ability among the students, with the result that those with a fair command of the language said that the time was wasted. Although the evaluation team did not keep an exact tally of the number of students raising questions about the language orientation, individual members of the team reported the comment frequently enough to prompt us to make special mention of this concern.

Most of the sponsoring institutions provide general criteria for admissions, but virtually all of them also pointed out that because of the expense of maintaining a study abroad program one of the first considerations was to be sure that there were sufficient students in the program to meet expenses. All of which means that admission requirements had to be fairly flexible. If there is an abundance of applicants, then the criteria are more stringently applied. If there is a lack of applicants, the criteria are modified to meet the needs.

But quite apart from the academic and linguistic requirements, which should not be underestimated, there is a need for much clearer specifications for admission in relation to the primary focus of each program. Many of the Spanish professors complained about the lack of preparation of the students in European and Spanish history and literature. They declared that the American students typically were ignorant of (or had only a passing knowledge of) general European history and were even less prepared to deal with the historical traditions of Spanish language and literature. One of the basic assumptions underlying the criticism of the Spanish professors was that the programs were primarily directed toward developing and enhancing knowledge in Spanish language and literature. Yet the expressed and unexpressed purposes of the various programs tended to go beyond this single objective. In some way there needs to be a clearer articulation for all parties concerned regarding the essential thrust of the programs. For those students who intend to continue their study in language and literature, a much deeper understanding of European and Spanish history and literature is needed. For those students engaged in a more general intercultural exchange, perhaps part of the program is to develop some degree of understanding of European and Spanish history. The latter group is much less likely to come with the kind of knowledge that the typical Spanish professor assumes as he teaches his own students.

Students need to be much more clearly informed as to the possibilities for study, the focus of the programs and, the limitations of the various programs. While the number was not large, there were a sufficient number of students whose objectives for participating in study abroad were only remotely related to what in fact the programs could provide and were, as a matter of fact, providing.

Much more study needs to be given to the ways in which student potential and expectation can be more closely and directly related to the kinds of opportunities available in the host country and at the host university. Moreover, each program needs to engage in a more systematic evaluation of student experiences on-site. A general questionnaire given at the end of the study period provides only limited insight. Some more systematic approach should involve sampling opinions at the beginning, during, at the end and sometime after the experience.

4. The Constituent Elements in the Program

> Some programs were sound academically with student involvement in the history and culture abroad. Other programs failed to utilize the foreign site and faculty within the instructional program and were as American Outposts to which faculty, students and staff were airlifted and deposited.

Most of the programs include a mixture of study, travel, and independent activities. Very few of the students view the experience as being wholly devoted to the classwork. But the Spanish university professors serving as instructors felt that the American students spend too much time in travel and independent activity. The Spanish professors view the year as one that should be primarily academic in its orientation, and they questioned the amount of time that is given to travel and long weekends. For the American student on the other hand, to be abroad is not only to have a chance to study in a foreign setting but is an opportunity to become acquainted with the country, and for some students, with large parts of Europe.

Many of the students say that they get more out of the field trips than out of the classes. The contemporary American student, to an increasing degree quite introspective and concerned with his own feelings and experience, wants a study abroad experience to be, if not totally different, at least quite different, from the classroom experience on the home campus--else why go to Europe? It is probably unrealistic to expect the majority of the students to view the study abroad term or year as an intensive academic experience. Most of the students are going to want to travel a about the country to become better acquainted with the people and the culture. They will, at least as undergraduates, resist any attempt to make the program totally "academic." If this is the case, then perhaps more study ought to be given to how to capitalize upon the cultural and travel opportunities available.

5. Facilities

> Study abroad programs rely heavily on inadequate and poorly arranged libraries in institutions abroad. Some collections of books (dictionaries, encyclopedia and some reference works) were available for most of the study programs. A review of the curriculum offered abroad indicated that learning resources are needed to support and augment these programs.

There seems little question that one of the singular weaknesses of study abroad programs is the lack of library resources. At least, students are not able to make use of libraries in the manner to which they are accustomed

at the home institutions. Most of the institutional programs abroad have small working libraries of reference and resource volumes.* Beyond these limited collections, students must make use of the university and other libraries available within the host city. It is difficult enough for the Spanish or French national to make use of such facilities. It becomes even more difficult for the foreign student. A semester or even a two-semester stay in a foreign center is hardly enough to make the American undergraduates sufficiently acquainted with the facilities and procedures to make adequate use of same. On the other hand, cost would prohibit the development of any extensive libraries for any one of the centers. Perhaps this is a major area in which some cooperative arrangements need to be made. Or, perhaps part of the learning experience is to have to face some of the frustrations involved in securing library volumes in a new setting. Or, perhaps a great deal more study needs to be given to determining what the function of the library should be in a study abroad program.

Classroom and seminar space made available for the study abroad programs varies greatly. In those instances in which programs make use of the university facilities, the American students have the same type of space made available to them as is available to the student of the host country. In other instances, the facilities may be of a make-shift nature--crowded rooms, no equipment, no study space.

Student housing is another matter of some concern. Students are demanding the same pattern abroad as they have on the American campus, namely to have a great deal more freedom in the selection of living arrangements. Students want to mix with Spanish students, yet the same students are quick to want to secure apartments in which several American students establish their own ghetto type of living. In most of the interviews with students we found that the one item that frequently came up was dissatisfaction with housing arrangements. Yet, reflecting upon the complaints, one hardly knows what an adequate solution might be. Most of the programs initially attempted to find homes with Spanish families. As the number of American students increased, the possibility of finding homes in an actual family setting became more difficult. In effect, most of those students who now live with "families" find themselves to be little more than paying boarders. They either do not attempt or are not allowed to become closely associated with the families; and the likelihood that the conditions will change is slight. Students who are told that they are going to live with Spanish families should be made more clearly aware of the nature of the living situation.

Limited numbers of students have been able to secure accomodations in colegios, resident halls for Spanish students. But American students

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*It should be noted that the Institute Internacional does have a quite substantial student library collection and reading area. The California State College program has set up a reference collection for the use of students in that program.

frequently find the restrictions placed upon the Spanish students at the residence halls much more than they had experienced on the American campus, and all too many attempt to move out of the colegio in the middle of the term. This creates problems for the residence hall, since by offering a place to an American student, the residence hall has denied a place to a Spanish student. And there also appears to be some implication for whatever subsidies the residence halls receive, there being no subsidy for spaces occupied by American students.

Apartment living creates its own problems. Students may not be aware of the nature of the contract into which they enter. Or, establishing an apartment with four or five American students can easily result in creating a situation in which there is even less contact with Spanish students and Spanish people.

6. Continuing Evaluation

> Some of the instructional programs were mediocre and were below the standard as advertised and described in brochures or compared with course requirements on the parent campus. Some of the texts were high school level. Students studying abroad were rightly concerned as to the quality and value of their instruction.

Most colleges and universities carry on relatively little evaluation at home. One should probably not expect any more evaluation to be undertaken in a study abroad program. Yet, considering the additional expense of such programs, there is a need for a great deal more in the way of continuing evaluation. And this evaluation needs to be more than the subjective opinions of a field director. At the very least, interviews and questionnaire responses at the beginning, during, and at the end of the study experience --as well as after a period of time on the home campus would seem to be desirable. We assume a great deal about the value of study abroad. We ought to be making more systematic inquiries into what is happening to the students and what might be done to make the study abroad experience more effective.

With few exceptions, institutions depend upon brief anecdotal reports, statements of students in newsletters, and glowing evaluations by field directors after they have returned to the home campus. Perhaps if any significant evaluation is to be undertaken this, too, will have to be on a cooperative basis.

7. Cooperative Endeavors

> The cost of study abroad varied. In some programs high tuition resulted in a surplus over

> expenditures while others trimmed certain phases of the program to balance the budget. A realistic assessment of the fiscal aspects of the programs needs to be made.

The evaluation team observed an almost fierce independence among the programs in Madrid. While participating in many common activities, each institution appeared determined to maintain its own identity. Thus, even institutions making use of the same facilities, the same language orientation program, the same Spanish faculty, and indeed having their students in the same classes with students from other programs, made their own particular interpretations of grades awarded by the Spanish faculty, arranged their own field trips, provided their own orientation and evaluations. It is understandable that each college would want to maintain its own program as a matter of institutional pride. Yet, with very few exceptions, even the students in these institutional programs are themselves from a number of different American colleges and universities. Each institution maintains its "own program" only in the sense that it has recruited the students from other American institutions, maintains a study director and certifies the credit.

Diversity of programs is desirable in the sense that different admission requirements, different course patterns, and different field experiences offer students options which they seem to consider important. Yet when the American institutions in a location such as Madrid must share facilities, classes and instructors, one wonders whether as a matter of fact there is as much individuality as the institution may claim.

There is a need for different approaches, but one wonders whether, with some thirty institutions in a location such as Madrid, there is a need for thirty different programs, or at least thirty programs under different administrative arrangements. The better part of wisdom would seem to be to have more cooperative endeavors, perhaps as one study director suggested, an American study center in which several American institutions participate, a study center which would also provide opportunities for Spanish students to study within the American pattern.

Or, perhaps it would be possible through cooperative planning to agree upon four or five different variations and then through the sharing of staff and study directors provide a wider range of opportunities for students. Suppose four or five programs now maintaining separate offices and field directors were to combine their resources. Would it not be possible for two or three of the field directors working together to divide the work and develop some specialized services?

We well realize that it is not within the purview of the evaluation committee to suggest a particular pattern of administration and organization. The decisions are, after all, up to the individual institutions. Yet

there does seem to be a waste of resources and personnel under the present structure. In a time of financial stringency, it would appear that some more efficient procedures might be developed.

8. Evaluation of Student Performance

> Considerable confusion exists with regard to grading practices and credit to be received by the participating students.

Grading practices among American colleges and universities vary greatly. We should not be surprised, therefore, that there is great variation in student evaluation procedures in study abroad programs. The problem is compounded, however, in that much of the instruction is carried on by nationals of the host country whose teaching style and expectations are often radically different from what is found in the American university, and hence considerable translation and interpretation are needed.

Study abroad programs face a built-in conflict at this point of evaluation. On the one hand, presumably one of the reasons for having students study abroad is to have them experience a different educational pattern. On the other hand, what is studied abroad must somehow fit into the four-year pattern of experience at the home campus--otherwise the student "loses" time in his program. If a student is to experience fully the European pattern of education, then he must expect to have a different relationship to the professor, to be in classes which are with few exceptions formal lectures, to be graded according to European patterns, and must expect to have relatively little feedback during the course itself. On the other hand, without the kinds of clues the student typically gains from exams and contacts with the professor on the home campus, the opportunities for discussion in class, the American student tends to be lost. If students interviewed complained about anything in the study abroad program it was that they were unable to see the professor outside of class, that he lectured too much, that he would not accept questions or differences of opinion. All of this suggests that both the American students and the foreign professors need more insight into the respective expectations of each.

In some of the programs in Madrid there is developing a core of professional teachers of American students. That is to say, a number of persons teaching in the American programs are teaching for three or four or even more of the programs and have made the teaching of American students virtually a full-time occupation. These persons have adapted teaching procedures and grading procedures to the American students and by and large are viewed by the students themselves as very effective teachers. But the experience in these classes is hardly typical of study in a foreign university.

In short, there is need for a great deal more study of intent and a great deal more clarity in explanation in each of the programs, in order to

match more adequately expectations both of the students and foreign professors. The evaluation team hastens to say, however, that in spite of the complaints, students invariably say that the experience is (or has been), on balance, a good one.

9. Role of the Field Director

> The resident director is the key to a well structured educational experience for students studying abroad. Language facility, physical and mental capacity, maturity of teaching and administrative experience, sound judgment, and previous foreign study experience, are some of the components of a good study director. Probably the greatest weakness is in changing some directors annually so that they are without previous experience in coordinating study abroad programs.

By the term "field director" we mean the person who is in direct charge of the day-to-day operations of the study program on-site. Perhaps the more frequently used term is "study director," but we wish to emphasize that we are referring to the person who is in charge in the field.

Without doubt, one of the key persons in any study abroad program is the field director. He is either personally responsible for or must supervise persons who take responsibility for such things as (1) arranging the courses to be offered the students in his program, (2) securing faculty, (3) evaluating the effectiveness of the courses and of the faculty, (4) overseeing housing and boarding arrangements for the students, (5) counseling, to a greater or lesser degree, on personal and academic problems, (6) evaluating the performance of the individual students, reconciling grading patterns in the host institution or by the foreign faculty with grading patterns at the home institution, or institutions, (7) scheduling cultural events, (8) representing the home institution in meetings with other study directors and foreign university officials, (9) maintaining his own scholarship. He has at least these roles, and there are permutations and combinations that expand the list almost indefinitely. The success or failure of the program for the individual student seems in large part to rest upon the effectiveness of the field director.

Appointment procedures and length of term for field directors become critical matters. We found a variety of procedures for appointment. Normally, to serve as a field director is a sought-after position. Persons interested in taking on the responsibility are more likely to have applied than to have been recruited. We found, however, that the field director did not necessarily have previous experience on-site. In many instances, his service may represent the first contact he has had with the study abroad program of his home institution and/or with the particular location in

which the program has been established. His previous orientation varies all the way from having little more than a vague job description to having served as a member of the international education or study abroad committee on the home campus and having spent several months in work with the outgoing director. Terms of service vary all the way from barely nine months to semi-permanent status.

On the basis of observation of the programs and in conversations with the field directors, the evaluation team is strongly of the opinion that terms of anything less than two years are undesirable. Unless the field director has had considerable experience in directing programs abroad, he finds that much of the first year is spent in learning how to work in the new situation. Most of the programs evaluated have apparently accepted this principle, because eight of the twelve programs provide for two or more years or for alternating directors. Mary Baldwin College, for example, provides continuity by having two persons in the directorship, each serving in alternating years. Middlebury College will work with three persons, all of whom are involved in the Middlebury summer program and each of whom will have one year terms every third year. On the other hand, four of the programs have directors for one year only. In some instances, there is very little contact between the incoming and outgoing directors. Especially with short terms, it would seem critical that the incoming director spend at least a month with the outgoing director to benefit from the experience and to become better acquainted with procedures.

In some instances, rather than appointing as director a staff member from an American university, the college or university will employ a resident national to oversee the day-to-day operations of the program. In both Strasbourg and Madrid some American institutions have made such arrangements. The advantage of having a resident national serve as director is that he is likely to be much more knowledgeable about local conditions, can be more effective in making housing arrangements and in negotiating for classes and classroom facilities. Among the disadvantages may be his lack of adequate knowledge of procedures in the American college and his limited understanding of the American undergraduate student; he may be ineffective in bridging the gap between the American and his own educational systems. And, even with his direct and immediate knowledge of his own university system, he may as an "insider" sometimes have more difficulty in setting up classes and securing teaching personnel. Moreover, managing the American study abroad program is likely to be a part-time position with relatively low priority.

We hasten to say that we found instances in which the foreign national was serving in an exceedingly effective way, while the American director was ineffective--and vice-versa. Whichever procedure an American college follows, it is necessary to specify clearly beforehand what the responsibilities of the director are and to establish some means for a regular auditing of performance--to protect both the director and the employing institution.

The evaluating team is not altogether convinced that having a continuing secretary or administrative assistant on-site compensates for lack of continuity in the directorship itself.

At the other extreme is the long-term assignment. The advantage of the long-term assignment, more than two years, is that the director becomes thoroughly acquainted with the procedures for maintaining the program. The disadvantage is that he may lose direct contact with the sponsoring institution or institutions. He needs to be a person who is thoroughly acquainted with the American college and university, with the course work and plans of the students at the home institution, and with the expectations of the home institution. Return visits to the sponsoring campus can compensate for extended contracts.

The problem the field director faces is that while he might desire a longer term, he feels that if he is away from the home campus for an extended period of time he is "forgotten." He may be passed by in promotion and tenure decisions. He is seldom, under the pressures of the overseas position, able to carry on any extensive writing or research. He may feel isolated from the mainstream of his own institution during the time that he is away. The study directors interviewed said they felt very definitely that by being off-campus they sacrificed some professional advancement. It seems to the evaluation team that much clearer understandings need to be reached between the field director and the sponsoring institution and more recognition be given for service as a field director.

The Future of FRACHE Involvement in Evaluation of Foreign Study Programs

The FRACHE objectives and purpose of the pilot evaluation of foreign study programs were met even though the broader benefits and impact of this project can be assessed only at longer range. Additional feedback from participating institutions will be requested after institutional representatives have studied their reports and met with their regional secretaries. Each member of the evaluating team was requested to evaluate candidly the procedures and value of the pilot evaluation. Without question the committee endorsed the need, value and worth of the project. The conclusion is obvious: that colleges and universities, perhaps through FRACHE, must be held accountable for the quality and effectiveness of foreign study programs.

The FRACHE Committee on Foreign Study recommends to the regional commissions that continuing interregional evaluation of foreign study programs of accredited institutions be made and that the evaluations become a significant part of continuing attention on their part.

The following suggestions and recommendations are made for consideration by FRACHE in conducting evaluations in the future:

a) Institutions may request evaluation of their foreign study programs by their regional accrediting Commissions which will coordinate through FRACHE.

b) The respective regional Commission may request of FRACHE evaluation of foreign study programs at the time of reaffirmation of accreditation of a member college.

c) If FRACHE continues evaluation of foreign study programs, Germany should be considered as the location for a second phase study. Germany, like Spain, has a concentration of study abroad programs. It is understood that evaluation activities by study directors in Germany are underway similar to those of the Regional Conference Board in Spain.

d) The chairman of the FRACHE foreign study committee recommends that the project continue to be directed by either the Executive Director of FRACHE or by one of the regional executive secretaries. A college representative would again be asked to chair the on-site evaluation.

e) The institutions whose programs are to be evaluated should assume the cost of the evaluations. If a package of evaluations is designed by FRACHE to include a number of institutions in a location, the cost for each college would not be extreme.

f) The selection, composition, and size of possible future evaluation teams should vary depending on the location, number and comprehensiveness of programs to be evaluated. Interregional representation should be a consideration of the selection process, although qualifications rather than geography should be foremost in the choices. The evaluation committee serving on the 1972 project was balanced in sex, teaching vs. administrative positions, and language facility.

g) The self-study guide should be continued, but refined with the help of foreign study program directors at home and abroad and the 1972 evaluating committee. Planning for institutional participation should be done sufficiently in advance to allow for completion of the self-study in time for review by the visiting committee well ahead of departure time to the site.

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In the light of this first experience, the Federation plans to follow up with a second stage pilot project evaluation of study abroad programs. As soon as data about the number and locations of American-sponsored programs in Austria, Germany, and Italy are collected, the next on-site visit will probably occur in the 1973-74 academic year. Thereafter, the Federation plans to continue the evaluation of study abroad programs in keeping with the nature of general accreditation which encompasses, through internal self-study and on-site evaluation visits, all of an institution's educational programs and activities. These evaluations, which may be requested by an institution or its regional accrediting commission, will be coordinated by FRACHE with the costs to be shared by the participating institutions on an equitable basis.

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The above material is excerpted from reports prepared by Gordon Sweet and Allan Pfnister for the Federation. Additional copies may be purchased for $1.00 each. Send requests to: FRACHE, Suite 770, One Dupont Circle N. W., Washington, D. C. 20036

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